

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00963 280233Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AGRE-00
/081 W

-----105254 280235Z /65

R 280200Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8256
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL UDORN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0963

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD PBOR ECON LA TH
SUBJECT: NEW GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS ON VIENTIANE FOOD MARKET

1. THE VIENTIANE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED
IN LOCAL SEMINARS THAT JUNE 28 IT WILL INSTITUTE
STRICT CONTROLS ON FOOD SALES. ACCORDING TO LOCAL
SOURCES, ALL MEAT WILL BE EXCHANGED ONLY FOR CHITS.
THE GOVERNMENT WILL DISTRIBUTE THESE CHITS THROUGH
PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT AND ASSOCIATIONS SUCH AS THE LAO
PATRIOTIC YOUTH ASSOCIATION, LABOR UNIONS, AND LAO
WOMEN'S PATRIOTIC LEAGUE. A RUMOR THAT CHITS WILL NOT
BE GIVEN TO FOREIGNERS HAS MADE THE LOCAL VIETNAMESE,
CHINESE AND INDIAN COMMUNITIES ANXIOUS AS THEY HAVE NO
ACCESS TO THE DIPLOMATIC SHOP WHERE PRODUCTS SUCH AS
MEAT ARE SOLD TO FOREIGNERS FOR DOLLARS.

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2. IN APPARENT EFFORTS TO CONTROL THE RECENT AND
SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE FREE MARKET RATE OF
DOLLARS, THE VIENTIANE GOVERNMENT HAS EFFECTIVELY
STOPPED RIVER TRADE OF SMALL DRY GOODS AND GROCERY
PRODUCTS WITH THAILAND. THIS TRADE HAS FLOURISHED
SINCE ABOUT JANUARY. PRIVATE THAI MERCHANTS BRINGING
THEIR GOODS TO LAOS JUNE 20 WERE MET BY LAO SOLDIERS

WHO DEMANDED AT GUN POINT THAT THEY SELL THEIR GOODS ONLY TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR KIP, THE LAO CURRENCY, AND CONTINUE TO DO SO IN THE FUTURE. UNABLE TO USE KIP IN THAILAND, THE THAI MERCHANTS HAVE DISCONTINUED THE RIVER TRADING.

3. THE CESSATION OF RIVER TRADE HAD AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON THE FREE MARKET RATE FOR DOLLARS. THE RATE DROPPED FROM 2100 KIP JUNE 20 TO 1800 KIP PER DOLLAR JUNE 22 AND HAS REMAINED AT THAT LEVEL SINCE THEN.
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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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From: VIENTIANE
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